

A Ceramic Tobacco Pipe Mold from Coshocton County, Ohio

James L. Murphy
The Ohio Historical Society
Columbus, Ohio

The unusual fired-clay tobacco pipe mold shown in figures 1 and 2 was discovered by Katy Hamilton on her father's farm, which is located on the west side of Wills Creek, S½ NW¼ Section 22, Franklin Township, Coshocton County, Ohio.

In June, 1982, Jeff Carskadden and the author visited the Hamilton farm, where S. Warner Hamilton allowed us to photograph the mold and showed us the general area of the find. Scattered fragments of redware and glazed stoneware, as well as hand-molded saggars, were found in the area south of the Hamilton home and west of the barn, leaving no doubt that there was once a pottery at this site.

The mold or, rather, the existing half of the mold is made of reddish-orange fired clay and measures 60 by 65 to 70 by 20mm. The pipe design is somewhat similar to Point Pleasant Ringed Elbow types described from Clermont Co., Ohio (Thomas and Burnett, 1972; Murphy, 1976), being unornamented except for two rings immediately below the bowl lip and three closely spaced rings at the end of the short stem. The initials "J.M." were carved on the side of the mold, apparently before it was fired.

Although the initials provide a clue

to the identity of the person who made the mold, he apparently was not the owner of the pottery. I have traced the title of the present Hamilton farm all the way back to Phillip Hershman, who originally entered the land in 1835 (Coshocton Co. Deed Records, vol. 8, p. 519). Deed records show that in 1863 Hershman divided the NW¼ of Section 22 between his sons John and Charles, John getting the southern half (Coshocton Co. Deed Records, vol. 36, p. 72). John B. Hershman sold his land to Jacob Sandel in 1874 (Coshocton Co. Deed Records, vol. 47, p. 375), and Sandel retained the land until his death in 1912. Sandel's heirs eventually sold the land to the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy in 1935 (Deed 45, p. 239), and it was purchased by S. Warner Hamilton in 1943. None of the land owners, be it noted, have the initials "J.M.," or for that matter even a surname beginning with the letter "M." Tax duplicates, special Federal manufacturing and industry schedules, as well as the regular population schedules, county histories, directories, the literature on the geology of Coshocton County, obituary notices, and wills and estate papers have all been searched, without revealing any reference to this forgotten pottery.

Age of the pipe mold must remain speculative, though the 1850-1870 period seems likely, particularly if credence is given to the possibility that the design of the pipe was influenced by Point Pleasant styles. No examples of pipes produced from this mold are known, and they probably were sold only locally, if they were produced to even that extent.

Acknowledgements—I am grateful to Katy Hamilton and her father, S. Warner Hamilton, for allowing me to study this pipe mold, as well as to Jeff Carskadden for bringing the find to my attention.

References

- Coshocton County Probate Court
1811- Coshocton County Deed Records.
Murphy, James L.
1976 "Reed stem tobacco pipes from Point Pleasant, Clermont County, Ohio." *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 5 nos. 1-2, p. 12-27.
Thomas, B.B. and Richard M. Burnett
1972 "A study of clay smoking pipes produced at a nineteenth century kiln at Point Pleasant, Ohio." *The Conference on Historic Site Archaeology Papers*, 1971, Vol. 6, p. 1-31.



Figure 1. Frontal view of Hamilton pipe mold. Initials "J.M." may be seen on left side.



Figure 2. Oblique view of Hamilton pipe mold, slightly reduced.